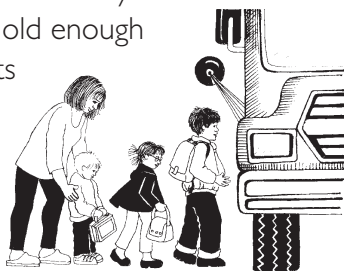


## Prepare your child for school

Help your child feel ready to start kindergarten. Visit the school with her before classes start. Talk about what to expect, like meeting new friends and learning new skills. Help her practice getting ready for school on time. Visit [www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten](http://www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten) for information on helping your child be ready for school.

A child in kindergarten is not old enough to walk to school or cross streets safely by herself. Walking to school is a healthy and safe activity if your child has a trusted adult to go with her. If she rides a bus, an adult should wait with her for the bus. Be sure an adult also meets her at the bus after school.



Make sure your child has a healthy breakfast every day. This will give her energy to learn, be active, and stay healthy. Offer foods like fruit, a whole grain tortilla with cheese, eggs or beans, low sugar cereal and milk, toast, yogurt, or oatmeal. Make sure she has a healthy lunch and snacks at school as well.

## Prepare school for your child

Talk with your child's teacher and others at school to help them learn about your child.

- Visit your child's teacher and describe the things your child knows how to do and any special needs.
- Throughout the year, talk with the teacher about what's going on in your child's life and how that might affect how he feels and acts.
- When you can, volunteer at your child's school.

## Schedule health and dental checkups

Your child should see the doctor once a year. Talk with your doctor about any concerns you have about

your child starting school. Talk about any illnesses or injuries this past year. Visit the dentist twice a year. Ask if your child needs fluoride varnish, tablets, or drops.

## Immunizations for kindergarten

When you enroll your child in school, you will need a Certificate of Immunization Status that shows the immunizations she's received. Your doctor, clinic, or school staff may be able to print this information for you. To meet vaccine requirements for school entry in Washington State, she needs to have:

- 3 doses: Hepatitis B (HepB)
- 4-5 doses: Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP)
- 3-4 doses: Inactivated poliovirus (IPV)
- 2 doses: Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- 2 doses: Chickenpox (varicella)

Your child probably got other immunizations not on this list, like *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) or pneumococcal (PCV). These diseases are most serious for infants and toddlers. Your child received the best protection possible by getting these vaccines when she was younger. Keep her protected as she grows with "booster" doses and other vaccines recommended for her age.

Being fully immunized protects your child from getting and spreading serious diseases. However, parents may choose to exempt their child from vaccines required for child care or school. A doctor needs to sign the exemption form stating that the parent received benefit and risk information about vaccines and the diseases they can prevent. If you choose to exempt your child, she will be at risk for disease and may need to stay home if there's an outbreak.

For more information,  
call your local health department or visit:  
[www.doh.wa.gov/immunization/schoolandchildcare](http://www.doh.wa.gov/immunization/schoolandchildcare)

# Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

## Help your child get enough sleep

Children are happier and learn better if they get enough sleep. School-aged children still need at least 10 to 11 hours of sleep a night. Bedtime should be at the same time every night. A quiet routine may help your child calm down before bed. Read a story or talk about his day. Say good night and let him fall asleep on his own.

## Television, videos, and games

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that school-age children spend no more than two hours per day in front of a screen. Too much time in front of TV, video games, tablets or phones, and the computer can limit the ways your child learns and may prevent him from getting enough physical activity.

There are rating systems for TV, movies, and video games. They can help you decide if a movie or game is OK for your child's age. However, it is best to watch with your child and talk about what he sees. Move TVs and computers into a family room. It is hard for you to know when and what he is watching when the TV or computer is in your child's room.

Visit [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)  
for information on and reviews of  
movies, games, and books

## Play is your child's job

Play is how your child learns about herself and the world. It even helps her get ready for school! She needs many different kinds of play. Help her find ways to use her whole body, especially her hands, her brain, and her imagination. Here are some easy, low-cost ideas:

### Body

- Toss a ball or a Frisbee out in the yard.
- Climb, run, and jump at the local park or playground.

### Hands

- Put together puzzles with up to 50 pieces.
- String buttons or beads on yarn.

### Brain

- Play simple card or board games.
- Read stories, share poems, and sing songs.

### Imagination

- Draw pictures, color with crayons, and paint.
- Dress up in old clothes and act out a story.

Whatever your child is doing as she plays, remember that she still needs you to watch and help keep her safe.

## Prevent injuries to children

Injuries are the leading cause of death among children. Between the ages of five and nine, children are most likely to be seriously injured by:

- Car crashes.
- Cars that hit children who are walking or biking.
- Crashing into something or falling while riding a bike.
- Drowning.
- Burns and fires.
- Falling from playground equipment and furniture.
- Guns.

Children this age need the protection of watchful parents and caregivers. Safe driving, helmets, booster seats, life jackets, locking up poisons, safe gun storage, and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors save lives.

## Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm safety tips

Have an escape plan in case your alarms go off. Practice your escape plan to the sound of the alarms. The more practice your child has with your escape plans, the better. This will help her learn to recognize the sound and follow the plan. The more you practice, the less scary it will be if she ever needs to follow the plan herself.

Teach your child that matches and lighters are tools for grown-ups, not toys for children. If she finds them, she should leave them alone and tell you right away.

## Safety in cars

Everyone who rides with you must use a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt that fits right. Washington State law requires that children ride in a booster seat until they are 8 years old or at least 4 feet, 9 inches tall (whichever comes first). Booster seats must be used with both a lap and shoulder belt, not just a lap belt. As your child gets older, he is likely to ride with other parents or caregivers. Make sure they buckle him into his car seat or booster seat correctly. Washington State law also requires that children younger than 13 sit in the back seat. If your vehicle does not have a back seat, slide the front seat all the way back and, if possible, turn off the air bag.



Call the **Safety Restraint Coalition** at  
**1-800-BUCK-L-UP (282-5587)**  
or visit [www.800bucklup.org](http://www.800bucklup.org)